

BLAZING GUNS AND REDSKINS

DEATH
VALLEY

DEATH VALLEY

10

FOOL'S GOLD

DEADLY TRIPLE-CROSS OVER THE
SPOILS OF A LOST INDIAN MINE.

A COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE
NOVEL OF THE OLD WEST.

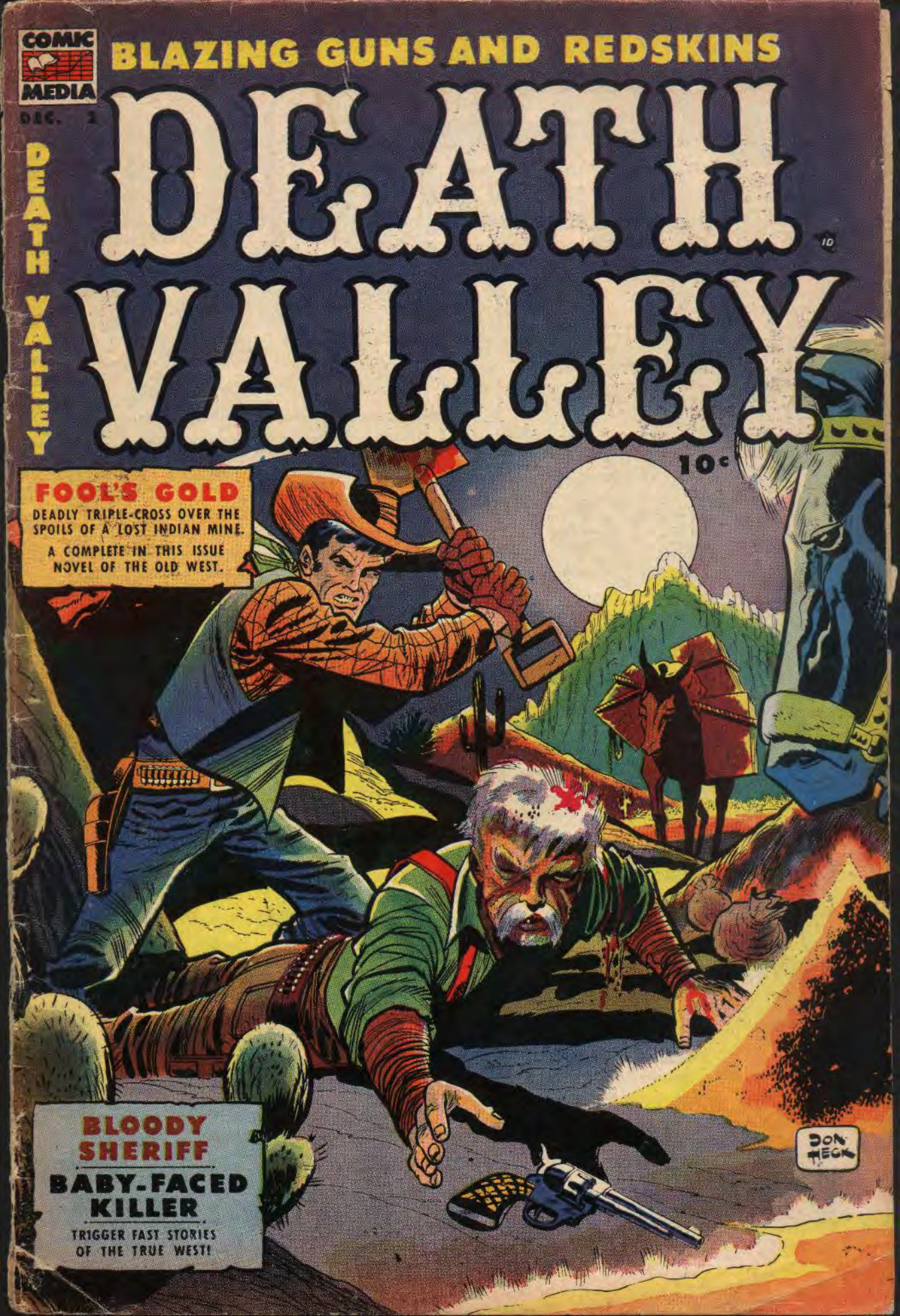
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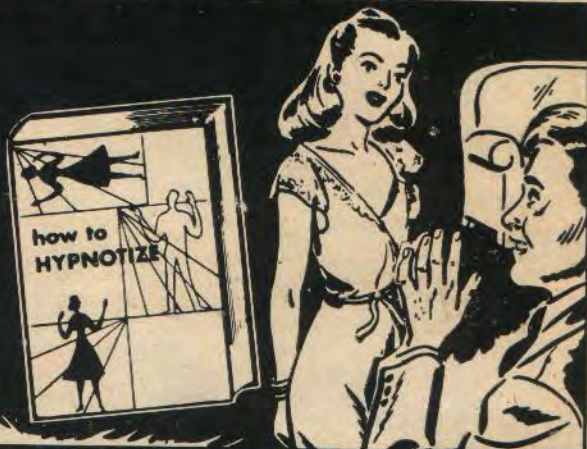
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EVERY GRAIN OF DUST,
EVERY NUGGET, WOULD
ASSAY PURER THAN
ANY EVER FOUND
AROUND DRYGULCH.
BUT IT WAS STILL...

FOOL'S GOLD

WHY YUH UNGRATEFUL
YOUNG COOT?

DON
HECK

TOM QUILLAN HAD SEARCHED FOR GOLD ALL OF HIS LIFE WITHOUT SUCCESS. THAT'S WHY WHEN HE MADE A STRIKE HE COULDN'T HELP TALKING ABOUT IT. PERHAPS FATE PUT JED BUSCH RIGHT WHERE HE COULD HEAR OLD TOM TALKING. ANYWAY, AFTER THAT, THEY SORT OF GOT TOGETHER AND HELPED ONE ANOTHER OUT... OUT OF THIS WORLD, THAT IS!

LOOKA HERE, GEORGE! YOU WONT
EVEN MISS A FINGER OR TWO O'
CHEAP STUFF, AND I'LL PAY YUH
SOON. GOT A MIGHTY PROMISIN'
CLAIM STAKED OUT, I HAVE!

I SAID NO,
N-O-N-O!

NOW GET
OUT AND
**STAY
OUT!**

YUH'LL SEE, GEORGE!
I'LL MAKE A STRIKE
ONE OF THESE
O... OUCH!



BUT A
MAN'S NOT
FINDING
ANY GOLD
DID NOT
STOP HIM
FROM
RAISING
A POWER-
FUL THIRST

DAD' BLAME IT! YUH'D A THOUGHT
IT COME OUTA GEORGE'S OWN
POCKET! WELL, THERE AIN'T
NOTHIN' TUH DO EXCEPT GET
BACK TUH DIGGIN' AN
SHOW 'EM!

COME ON,
MAUD! COME
ON, YUH DURN
CRITTER!



SO RODE WAH-NEE-TAH-SEE, DAUGHTER OF THE
APACHE CHIEF, WAR CLOUD, HEEDLESS OF DAN-
GER, THOUGHTLESS OF LOOSE SHALE, SUDDENLY...



AS OLD TOM QUILLAN INCHED HIS WAY UP THE
NARROW MOUNTAIN TRAIL, A YOUNG GIRL
RODE RECKLESSLY, DISDAINFUL OF THE
TRAVELED PATHS, RODE AS AN INDIAN GIRL
WOULD RIDE, WITH THE WIND WHIPPING
HER FACE...



A MOMENT LATER, AT A BEND
IN THE TRAIL...

DAD BLAST IT, MAUD... UH...
WHOA!... AN INJUN HOSS!
A SPILL, TOO! BUT WHAR'S
THE INJUN?



WELL, I'LL BE GOL-BLAMED!
AN INJUN GAL! HURT BAD...
AIN'T MOVIN'!
MAYBE DEAD!



ANYHOW, YUH JEST
CAN'T LEAVE HER
HERE FER THE
BUZZARDS!



...AN' SHE
DON'T WEIGH
HARDLY
NOTHIN'.



DON'T TRUST THEM
APACHES, NONE. BUT
SHUCKS, A LITTLE APACHE
GAL NEVER HARMED
NOBODY!



HMM MIGHTY
PURTY, TOO...



AS QUILLAN LAID THE GIRL GENTLY ON THE GROUND,
SHE CAME TO AND THERE WAS FEAR IN HER EYES...

JEST TAKE IT EASY LITTLE LADY, AND
YUH'LL BE ALL RIGHT. BUT HOW IN
TARNATION AM I GONNA GET YUH
TO VORE PAPPY WITH YORE
BUSTED LEG?



SUDDENLY THE GIRL SAT UPRIGHT, AND CLAPPING HAND TO MOUTH REPEATEDLY, GAVE A SHRILL STACCATO YELL!!!



QUICKLY... AN ANSWERING CRY, AND...



THERE WERE ANXIOUS MOMENTS FOR OLD TOM QUILLAN, AS THE BAND OF MURDEROUS APACHE RODE IN ON THE SCENE. THEN THE LITTLE DAUGHTER SPOKE TO HER FATHER, CHIEF WAR CLOUD, AND HE TURNED TO THE MINER...

YOU FRIEND. SAVE LIFE OF WAH-NEE-TAH-SEE. YOU COME. HEAP MUCH GOLD.

WHAT'S THAT? WHAT'S THAT YUH SAY?



SENDING WAH-NEE-TAH-SEE TO CAMP WITH THE REST OF THE BAND, WAR CLOUD, TAKING ONE BRAVE TO FOLLOW, LED TOM QUILLAN ON THE GIRL'S HORSE, STRAIGHT OVER THE MOUNTAIN. QUILLAN DIDN'T TRUST THE REDSKIN, BUT THERE WAS NOTHING HE COULD DO ABOUT IT...

DURN FOOL! SHOULDA LEFT THE YOUNG UN THAR TUH DIE!



THEY REACHED A NARROW MOUNTAIN PASS AND TOM'S HEART WENT UP INTO HIS THROAT...

THIS IS IT, I RECKON! UP IN THIS GOD-FORSAKEN COUNTRY, THEY WON'T EVEN FIND M'BODY! WELL, I'LL GIVE 'EM A TASTE OF LEAD AFORE I GO DOWN, BY THUNDER!



THEN--DOWN INTO A VALLEY--AND AROUND A HUGE ROCK--WAR CLOUD DISMOUNTED, ORDERED TOM TO DISMOUNT TOO.

THERE, YOU TAKE!

JUMPIN' JUNIPER! LOOKIT!





JED LEFT HIS HORSE AT THE RAIL AND SAUNTERED EASILY INTO THE BANK...

STILL OPEN FER BUSINESS. GOOD! SAVES CRASHIN' IN THE DOOR!



REACH HIGH, EVERYBODY! FIRST ONE AS MOVES IS GONNA DIE OF LEAD POISONIN'!



THERE WAS ONLY ONE HITCH IN JED'S PLAN. THE SHERIFF HAD SEEN HIM ENTER THE BANK, AND HADN'T LIKED HIS LOOKS...

MAYBE YOU OUGHTA FOLLOW YORE OWN ADVICE, HOMBRE! HIGH NOW! GET 'EM HIGH!



GUESS YUH AINT NEVER HEARD O' ME, MISTER! FASTEST DRAW, DEADDEST SHOT WEST O' THE PECOS!



WANTED
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REWARD

JED'S REPUTATION AS A DEADSHOT SOON CAUGHT UP WITH HIM, AND THE TERRITORY GOT TO BE A MIGHTY UNHEALTHY PLACE TO LIVE IN...

BUT THE COUNTRY WAS BROAD, SO THAT A MAN DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TROUBLE LOSING HIMSELF IF HE TRIED A LITTLE... ANYWAY, JED HADN'T RAISED A PENNY IN THE IN THE TERRITORY, IN SPITE OF SEVEN KILLINGS IN THE PAST FEW DAYS...



THEN IN THE NEW TERRITORY, JED CAME UPON DRYGULCH. DRYGULCH HAD STARTED TO GROW INTO A BOOM TOWN ON THE BASIS OF A SMALL GOLD STRIKE AND A LARGE AMOUNT OF RUMOR. THERE WAS NO LAW IN DRYGULCH YET. JED WOULD LIKE THAT...





OLD TOM QUILLAN HAD WAITED A LIFETIME FOR A SITUATION LIKE THE ONE IN WHICH HE FOUND HIMSELF, AND HE DIDN'T WASTE A SINGLE MOMENT OF IT...



DID YUH HEAR THAT OLD MAN?
HE SAYS THERE'S PLENTY MORE
WHERE IT COMES FROM! RECKON
HE'S GOT A NICE LOAD STASHED
AWAY IN HIS CABIN. DON'T KNOW
WHERE HE HOLES UP THOUGH!

HE'LL BE PLENTY
HIGH WHEN HE
LEAVES HERE.
RED WON'T
KNOW WERE
FOLLOWING HIM!



LATER...

WAL, S'LONG, BABY...
I'LL SHORE 'NUFF BE
SEEN' YUH AGIN!

SO LONG, POP.
SURE YOU CAN
MAKE IT?



AS QUILLAN LEFT...

OKAY.
LET'S
GO!



NO ONE HAD PAID ANY ATTENTION TO THE LONE
DRINKER, WHO HAD NOT LEFT HIS TABLE. NO ONE
NOTICED JED NOW...

THAT THERE IS RED HARPER
...WANTED AS A ROAD AGENT.
RECKON HELL BE GETTING
A PARDNER HE DON'T
HANKER FOR.



TOM QUILLAN WAS IN NO SHAPE TO KNOW ANYONE
WAS FOLLOWING HIM. AND RED HARPER NEVER
SUSPECTED THAT HE AND HIS BOYS ALSO HAD
EYES WATCHING THEIR EVERYMOVE...

WHEN JED MOVED INTO SIGHT OF TOM QUILLAN'S
CABIN, A KILLING WAS ALREADY IN THE MAKING...

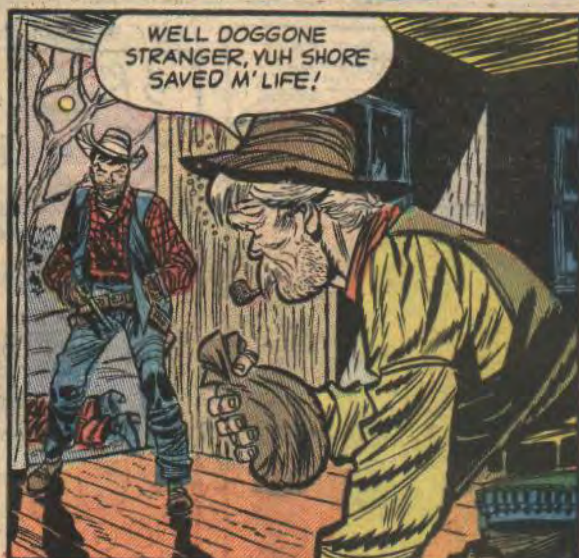




THE ROAR OF HIS GUNS
BROKE THE SILENCE LIKE
AN EARTHQUAKE...



JED THEN RUSHED FORWARD FOR THE KILL...



THEN BEFORE THE ASTOUNDED JED COULD
THINK TO PULL THE TRIGGER...



IT'S A SECRET WHERE
I GIT THE GOLD,,, BUT
COME BACK NEXT WEEK
AN',,, EVERY WEEK,,, AS
LONG AS I LIVE,,, FER
MORE OF THE SAME

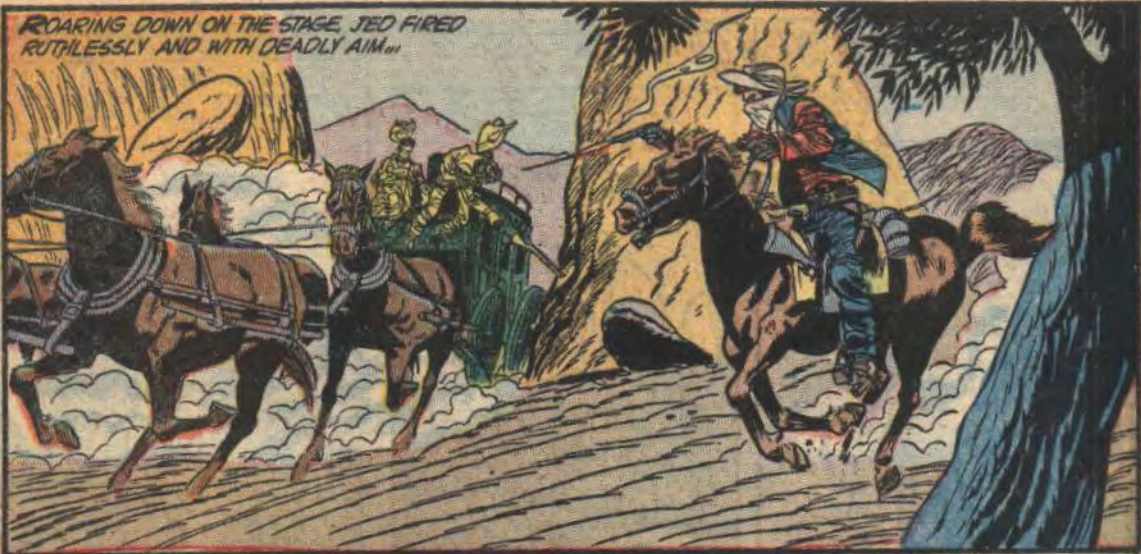
5 RED 11 BLACK

A stylized illustration of a cowboy in a blue shirt and jeans, seen from behind, with a large green profile of a man's face in the foreground. The cowboy is wearing a brown cowboy hat and a red and black plaid shirt. He is holding a yellow object, possibly a lasso or a piece of fabric. The green profile of a man's face is in the foreground, looking towards the cowboy. The background is a textured, light brown color.

WHY YOU FOOL!
THAT'S
DAYS AWAY! I
WANT MONEY NOW!
BIG SHOT! YOU!
HA-HA-HA-HA!

SO SHE HAS TO HAVE MONEY NOW, EH? WELL, THEN, I'LL GIT HER MONEY!

ROARING DOWN ON THE STAGE, JED FIRED RUTHLESSLY AND WITH DEADLY AIM...



NO! NO!
PLEASE TAKE
MY MONEY, BUT...
AARGH-H-H-H!

AIN'T LEAVIN'
NO WITNESSES!
AIN'T A FOOL!



JED SAW A MAN HUDDLED INSIDE THE STAGE, AND WHEN HE WENT FOR HIM...

LISTEN, DON'T SHOOT, MISTER!
I BEEN TO THE DOC'S AT THE COUNTY
SEAT! AIN'T GOT LONG TUM LIVE!
BESIDES, I KIN GIVE YUH MORE
GOLD THEN YUH'D FIND HERE,
ANYHOW!

IT'S THE
OLD MAN!
I CAN'T
SHOOT
HIM!



ALTHOUGH JED COULDN'T KILL OLD TOM QUILLAN, HE COULDN'T LET HIM KNOW WHO HE WAS, EITHER. HE FAKED A KILL, AIMED JUST PAST THE MINER'S HEAD...

AII-Y-Y-Y!



THE STAGE STICKUP NETTED ENOUGH TO SEND JED'S WIFE OUT ON A SPENDING TAG. BUT IT GAVE JED A BAD CASE OF JITTERS...

THE OLD COOT DIDN'T KNOW ME, BUT HE OFFERED TO GIVE ME HIS GOLD! SUPPOSE I'D'A BEEN SOMEBODY ELSE!... BESIDES, WHAT IF THE OLD FOOL **DOES** KICK OFF! I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHERE HIS CLAIM IS!



THAT NIGHT JED WENT INTO THE MOUNTAINS AND SETTLED HIMSELF WHERE HE COULD WATCH OLD TOM'S CABIN... THEN NEXT MORNING...



THERE HE GOES! PACK MULE AND ALL!

THE TRAIL WAS LONG AND TORTUROUS, BUT JED KEPT THE OLD MAN IN SIGHT...



THE DURNED OLD FOX! NOBODY'D EVER OF EVEN SEEN THAT NARROW PASS! HOW IN THUNDER'D HE EVER FIND IT HISSELF?

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

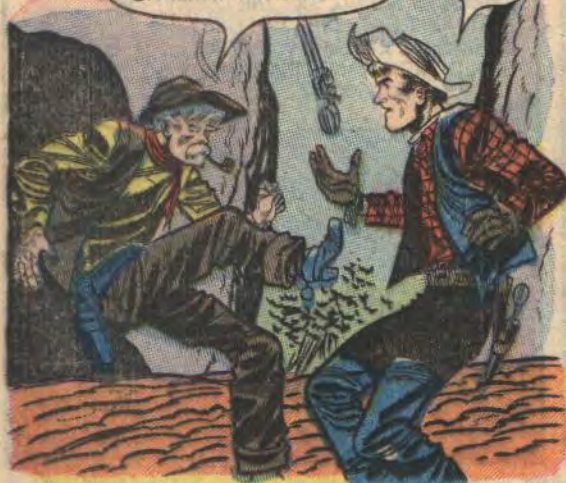
OH...YOU! WHY, YUH DURNED IDIOT! WHAT YUH DOIN' HERE?

HUH! WHAT DO YUH SUPPOSE, POP?



WHY, YUH UNGRATEFUL YOUNG SQUIRT! YUH WON'T GIT AWAY WITH IT!

WHY YA...!



YOU'RE THE DEVIL HELD UP THE STAGE! NO WONDER YUH DIDN'T KILL ME THEN! YUH WOULDN'T A KNOWN WHERE TUH LOOK FER THE GOLD!

THAT'S THE IDEA!

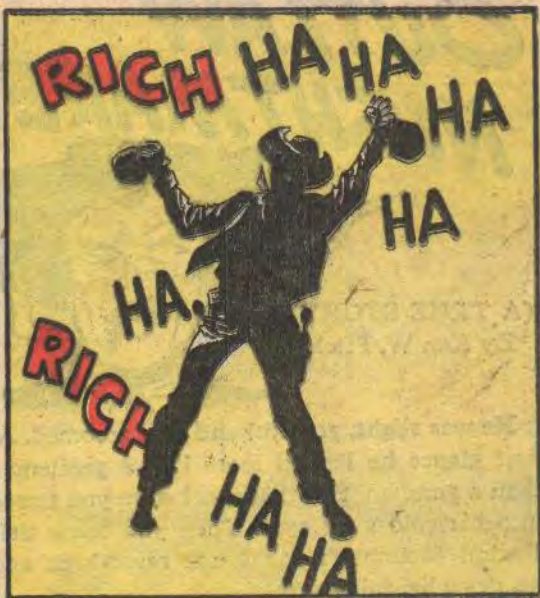


NOW DIE, YOU OLD WALRUS! DIE! DIE!



THIS IS DURN NEAR DEEP ENOUGH, I RECKON. I'LL BE GLAD TUH GIT THE OLD FOOL PLANTED AND OUTTA SIGHT!





OUTLAW NIGHTMARE

(A TRUE STORY)

By Ken W. Fitch



He was slight, graceful and well groomed. At first glance he looked more like a gentleman than a gunman. But that was before you stared into his cold gray eyes. Then you knew that Burton Mossman's mind was razor-keen and his draw lightning-fast.

Burt Mossman first made his presence felt among the bandits and rustlers of Arizona when he joined the Aztec Cattle Company as its superintendent, around the turn of the century. At that time Navajo and Apache counties in Arizona were hotbeds of outlawry. So heavy was the toll of rustlers that cattlemen were thinking of going out of business. Evidence necessary to convict was almost impossible to obtain. If caught branding cattle illegally the thief claimed he had made a mistake. Moreover, rustlers easily drove thousands of heads of cattle across the border into Mexico.

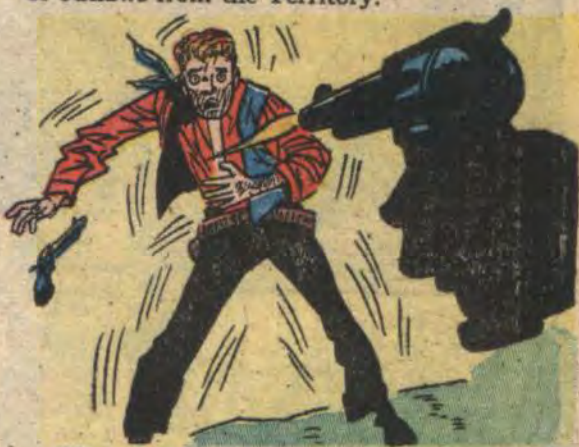
Yet, within a year after Mossman joined the Aztec outfit at least a dozen rustlers were sent to prison. That was something of a record. For about fifteen years prior to that not one single conviction had been obtained against cattle thieves in either Navajo or Apache counties.

Mossman worked personally with his men on the range. If a band of rustlers was apprehended, Burt Mossman was there to see that evidence necessary for conviction was obtained on the spot.

In spite of all Mossman's efforts, however, rustlers swarmed over the land. When one cattle thief was put away safely in jail, there would be two others arriving to take his place. And so, in time he realized that he was risking his life constantly for little or no real advantage, other than to incur the hate of the rustlers, who had sworn to kill him. In one instance, Mossman was riding with a deputy sheriff, when they came upon a band of Mexicans known to belong to the Baca gang. The two men opened fire on the

Mexicans and dispersed them, after capturing one of their members. So fierce and close was the fighting that day that the reins Mossman held in his hand were severed by a Mexican bullet. When the outlaws rode off for reinforcements, Mossman and his companion hurried their captive to the county seat, arriving there not more than a half hour ahead of the Mexicans, who, in greater numbers, had taken up the trail of Mossman and his companion in the hope of slaughtering them.

About that time, the Arizona Territorial Legislature authorized the governor to organize a group of Arizona Rangers, after the pattern of the Texas Rangers. The governor of the territory asked Mossman to captain the group. He accepted on the condition that he be allowed to pick his own men. It was a small group, consisting of only fourteen men including Mossman, and their task was staggering, namely the wiping out of thieves, murderers, and other kinds of outlaws from the Territory.



When the band was organized, no man's cattle, sheep, home, or even life were safe. At the end of a year the majority of lawless men either lay in boothill cemetery, or disappeared from the territory to parts unknown. And most of the credit for the success of this lay at the feet of Burt Mossman, first because of the character of men he picked, second because of his dauntless leadership.

Mossman demanded the highest efficiency of his men and made it a rule that they should be fully armed, day or night, and ready for action. In twos and threes and singly they spread out over Arizona Territory, tracking down lawlessness wherever it might arise, disappearing for months at a time, on the dogged trail of some criminal. At one time two of Mossman's trusted men were killed by an outlaw they were tracking. Mossman did not learn of their deaths until

some time later. But immediately he took two Indian guides and for three weeks trailed the killer relentlessly. Only the fact that the murderer escaped out of the territory, never to return, caused Mossman to relent in his search.



The greatest single personal victory of Mossman's career was the tracking down and capturing of a vicious killer by the name of Augustine Chacon. Chacon had a record of about thirty killings to his credit, and some of them were the most cruel and ruthless in the history of the west. Once he and his gang had robbed a store and killed the proprietor by slashing him almost beyond recognition with knives. At another time he murdered a sheriff in front of his posse, while the sheriff was approaching Chacon's gang under a white flag of truce to speak with him. Chacon had been caught and sentenced to hang, but a week before the execution he escaped and fled into Mexico. From there he carried on countless raids in Arizona, rustling cattle, robbing and murdering relentlessly. Mossman determined to take the Mexican. Alone.

By playing the part of an escaped outlaw, Mossman was able to contact a couple of Chacon's men, and finally Chacon.

"The law's after me in Arizona," Mossman said. "I want to join up with you." The bandit Chacon raised his eyebrows. Mossman went on. "There's a fine batch of horses about ten miles across the border. They'd be easy to steal. I can lead you to them." Chacon showed some interest.

"You can stay," he said.

Chacon ordered breaking of camp and went in the lead of his men with Mossman beside him. But the Mexican never for an instant relaxed his vigilance. They traveled across the border, which was what Mossman wanted, for to make an arrest he had to have the outlaw within his own jurisdiction. Darkness had fallen before

they reached the location where Mossman had said the horses would be. It was therefore necessary to spend the night in camp, for, as Chacon knew, it would be useless to attempt to round up the animals in the darkness.

The chance Mossman had looked for came after breakfast the following morning. Chacon and Mossman were some distance from the band. If he did not act at once, the Ranger knew he might never have another chance. Acting casually, so as not to arouse Chacon's suspicion, Mossman edged into position. He whipped out his gun.

"Get 'em up, Chacon, or you're dead where you stand!"



Chacon started.

"Get on your horse," Mossman commanded. While the bandit was thus occupied, the Ranger disarmed his captive.

There was nothing suspicious about their leaving as far as the rest of the camp was concerned. Chacon's hands were on his horse's reins. They might have been on the way to look over the land.

"Ride for the railroad," said Mossman. "Don't try to escape, or I'll kill you."

Burt Mossman delivered his captive to the sheriff at Benson, and shortly after that the Mexican killer died at the end of a hangman's rope. The incident from beginning to end had been charged with dynamite, but Mossman's cool, skillful courage had carried events to their logical conclusion.

A year had passed since Burt Mossman had taken over the Arizona Rangers. It was now safe for an honest man to stay in business. It was time, Mossman thought, to resign and go back to a ranchman's ways.





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**Say Men, Girls
In Choosing Date**

What a "black mark" is the blackhead... according to men and girls popular enough to be choosy about dates! Because blackheads ARE ugly! Blackheads ARE grimy! They DON'T look good in close-ups! So can you blame the fellow who says, "Sure, I meet lots of girls who look cute at first glance. But if, on that second glance, I see dingy blackheads, it's good night!"

Or can you blame the girl who confesses, "I hate to go out with that fellow who has blackheads." But you—are YOUR ears burning?

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No Infection
No Injury
to Skin
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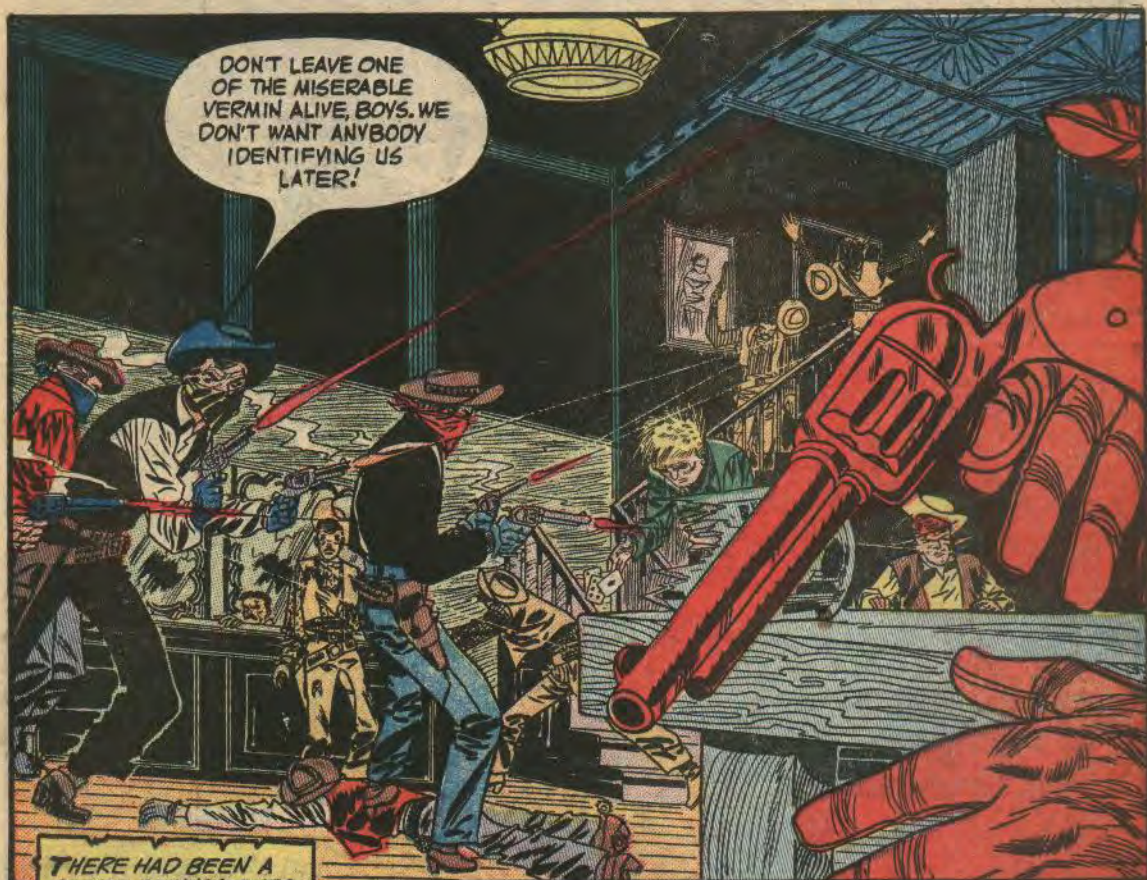
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BART LEONARD HAD THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT OF THE WHOLE TOWN OF WEST CITY, AND THAT WAS WHY THEY ELECTED HIM THEIR LAWMAN. AND ALL THE WHILE, HE WAS LEADING A MURDEROUS GANG OF ROAD AGENTS, THIEVES AND KILLERS. HE WAS THE...

BLOODY SHERIFF



THERE HAD BEEN A SERIES OF UNCHECKED ROBBERIES AND HOLDUPS, IN WHICH THE VICTIMS LOST THEIR LIVES AS WELL AS THEIR MONEY, THROUGH VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. BUT NONE HAD EVER MATCHED THE HOLD-UP OF THE SILVER SLIPPER CAFE IN ROCKTON, THIRTY MILES NORTH OF WEST CITY...



THERE WAS A ROAR LIKE THUNDER AS POUNDING
HOOPS CARRIED THE MARAUDERS OUT OF TOWN...



AN HOUR
LATER IN A
MOUNTAIN
HIDEOUT.

STEP UP, MEN, AND
GET YOUR CUT.
THEN I HAVE
SOMETHING TO
SAY TO YOU!



NOW LOOK, I'M HEADING
BACK TO WEST CITY. NONE OF
YOU START OUT FOR AT LEAST
HALF AN HOUR. THEN SPREAD
OUT AND SEEP INTO TOWN A
FEW AT A TIME AND SACK UP.
LIKELY I'LL BE WAKING YOU
BEFORE DAWN TO FORM
A POSSE!



A FEW MINUTES LATER, BART LEONARD, HIS SADDLE-
BAGS FILLED WITH HIS SHARE, LEFT FOR WEST CITY...



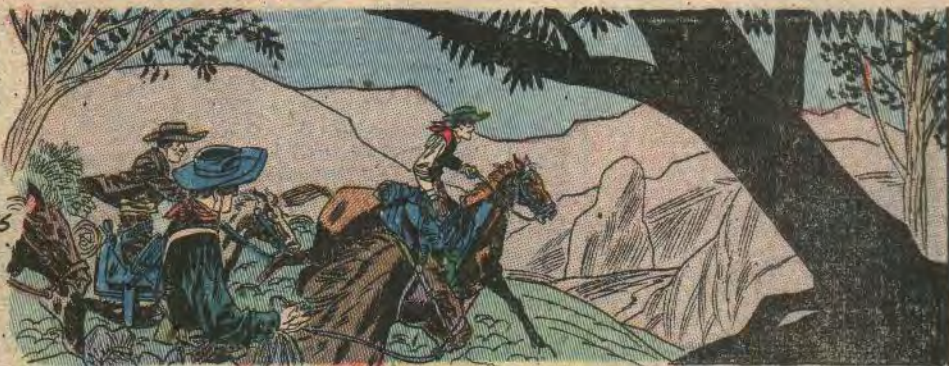
BART LEONARD, THE SHERIFF AT WEST CITY, WAS UP BEFORE DAWN, AS HE WAS FINISHING HIS DRESSING...

YES, YES...
WAIT A MINUTE!
I'M COMING!

SHERIFF, THERE WAS A MASS MURDER UP AT ROCKTON, LAST NIGHT! SILVER SLIPPER WAS TAKEN AND EVERYLAST CUSTOMER KILLED! YOU'D BETTER GET SOME MEN TOGETHER... FOLKS AT ROCKTON SAY THE BANDITS HEADED THIS WAY!

OKAY, HANK!
I'LL ROUND UP
THE BOYS!

AT THE CRACK OF DAWN THE SHERIFF LED A POSSE INTO THE HILLS... MOST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POSSE BELONGING TO THE GANG WHO HAD THEMSELVES PERFORMED THE MASSACRE THE NIGHT BEFORE...



THEY KEPT ON THE TRAIL, AND THEN LATE IN THE AFTERNOON...

IT LOOKS AS IF THEY GOT AWAY CLEAN BOYS! I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING TO DO BUT RETURN TO TOWN AND WAIT FOR A BREAK! SOONER OR LATER THE KILLERS WILL SHOW THEIR HANDS AND THEN WE'LL HAVE THEM!

RECKON
YO'RE
RIGHT
SHERIFF!

THE SHERIFF RETURNED TO TOWN AND THINGS QUIETED DOWN. LATER THAT NIGHT...

WHO YUH FIGURE IS
PULLIN' THEM JOBS?
GOT ANY IDEAS?

NOT A ONE.
BUT WE'LL BE
ON THE LOOKOUT.
DON'T WORRY! I'LL
GET THEM... I'LL
OPEN, MEN... FIVE
BLUE CHIPS!

IT WAS NEAR MIDNIGHT WHEN BART LEONARD FINISHED HIS GAME. AS HE WALKED TOWARD HOME HE SAW A SHADOW MOVING IN AN ALLEY!

A KNIFE JOB!
...AND IT LOOKS
LIKE...



BY DAWN THERE WAS A KNOCK AT THE SHERIFF'S DOOR...



THE TWO MEN TIED THEIR HORSES
AT THE RAIL AND WENT INSIDE...



A SQUARE DANCE!
ED I'M GOING TO
HAVE MYSELF A
TURN AT IT!

NOT ME,
BART! I'LL
STAND ASIDE
AND LOOK
ON!

YOU'RE A MIGHTY
NICE DANCER, MISS,
AND MIGHTY PRETTY,
TOO! MIND TELLING
ME YOUR NAME?

CATHY HOWARD.
AND THANK YOU
FOR THE COMPLI-
MENTS... IF YOU
REALLY MEAN
THEM!

I MEAN THEM, ALL RIGHT,
MISS CATHY. I MIGHT TELL
YOU MY NAME IF YOU'RE
INTERESTED, TOO. BART
LEONARD, PERHAPS
YOU'VE HEARD OF ME!

OH, YES! YOU'RE
THE SHERIFF OF
WEST CITY!
YOU'RE FAMOUS
AROUND THESE
PARTS!



BART LEONARD SETTLED DOWN IN ROCKTON, RENTING A CABIN WITH ED WESTBROOK. EACH MAN FEARING AND HATING THE OTHER, YET EACH WILLING TO WAIT FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT TO STRIKE! ED WESTBROOK WAITED HIS OPPORTUNITY IN A STATE OF DRUNKENNESS...



WHILE BART LEONARD COURTED CATHY HOWARD, AND SUDDENLY FELT A STRONG DESIRE TO BREAK WITH HIS PAST...



AND SO, ONE DAY, LEONARD PROPOSED TO CATHY...

I'M SORRY, BART. YOU'RE A WONDERFUL FRIEND, BUT YOU SEE, I'M ALREADY ENGAGED... TO TOM WALDRON. HE WORKING A CLAIM RIGHT NOW, ON NORTH RIVER.



OUT OF CATHY'S REFUSAL, A SCHEME GREW IN BART LEONARD'S MIND...

RIDE TO WEST CITY, ED, ROUND UP THE BOYS AND TELL 'EM TO WANDER OUT THIS WAY. A FEW AT A TIME SO THEY WON'T LOOK LIKE A GANG!

OKAY... LOOKS LIKE VUH GOT A JOB LINED UP, EH?

HOPE IT'S A SHOOTIN' JOB! ONE OF MY SLUGS WILL FILL YO'RE LIVER, SHORE!



WHEN TOM WALDRON RODE INTO TOWN ONE NIGHT, CATHY INTRODUCED HIM TO BART LEONARD...

SO YO'RE CATHY'S FIANCE, EH, WALDRON? I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU, MISTER, I'VE GOT MY EYE ON HER, TOO! ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR!

YEAH. I RECKON IT WORKS BOTH WAYS!



LATER THAT WEEK IN THE HILLS...

I'VE GOT A SWEET HAUL LINED UP BOYS. IT'LL TAKE A BIT OF PLANNING. SO LIE LOW, WHILE I BUILD UP A LOT OF FRIENDSHIPS IN TOWN... DON'T GET INTO ANY BRAWLS, AND DON'T FLASH ANY BIG MONEY!



IT WAS ALMOST A MONTH LATER THAT A SILENT DEADLY COLUMN RODE INTO THE MOUNTAINS IN THE DIRECTION OF NORTH RIVER...



WE'LL MAKE A RICH HAUL OF DUST TONIGHT. BUT MORE IMPORTANT, I'LL GET WALDRON AND WESTBROOK BOTH OUT OF THE WAY!



NORTH RIVER WAS A BIG RICH CAMP WHOSE GOLD HAD ONLY BEEN TOUCHED. LEONARD LED THE WAY STEALTHILY...

THE CAMP'S SLEEPING SOUND. GET READY... DON'T LEAVE ONE OF 'EM ALIVE!



SUDDENLY A TORCH FLARED IN THE BLACKNESS AND A RIFLE CRACKED. IN THE FOLLOWING SECOND BEDLAM BROKE LOOSE AND LEONARD AND HIS MURDEROUS GANG REALIZED THEY HAD RUN STRAIGHT INTO AN... **AMBUSH!!**



NO YOU DON'T, LEONARD.



WHEN YOU SAID YOU WERE FOND OF CATHY, LEONARD, YOU SAID THE WRONG THING. 'CAUSE ANYONE SHE MARRIES HAS TO BE OKAY!

I INQUIRED ABOUT YOU AT WEST CITY, LEONARD. IT SEEMS YOU **HAD** A GOOD REP... UNTIL YOU LEFT TOWN! THEN ALL THE KILLINGS. SUDDENLY STOPPED AROUND THERE!



SO WE KEPT AN EYE ON YOU, WE KNEW YOUR GANG CAME INTO TOWN, AND WE KNEW WHEN YOU SET OUT TONIGHT...

IT WAS WESTBROOK WHO BROKE DOWN FIRST AND TOLD THE WHOLE SORDID STORY... HOPING TO GET MERCY...

HE GOT IT ALL RIGHT. HE WAS THE FIRST TO HANG... SO HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO SEE BART LEONARD SQUIRM.

NO! NO! NO! PLEASE! NO!



THE END

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SENT ON APPROVAL — MAIL COUPON NOW!

FOLKS AROUND SILVER CITY CONSIDERED MARK JACKSON STILL A BOY. BUT DESPITE HIS 19 YEARS HE PROVED HE WAS ALL MAN WHEN HE FOLLOWED HIS CONVICTIONS AND FOUGHT 6-1 ODDS...

ALONE



ALL RIGHT, BOLING... YOU AND YORE BOYS HAD YORE CHANCE! NOW EAT LEAD!

YOUNG MARK HAD WHIPPED UP A SIGHT OF COURAGE THAT ANY MAN COULD BE PROUD OF THE DAY HE WENT TO CALL ON MISS SALLY. BUT...

NOW LOOK HERE, SON, SALLY'S ALMOST EIGHTEEN, AND LIKE TO MARRY SOME GOOD MAN ANY DAY NOW. SEEMS SHE OUGHTN'T BE A WASTIN' TIME WITH A YOUNGSTER WHO DON'T LIKELY SHAVE MORE'N ONCE A MONTH!

BUT... UH... WELL, YES, SHERIFF!



SOMEHOW MARK'S COURAGE EVAPORATED IN THE COLD LIGHT OF THE SHERIFF'S APPRAISAL, AND HE HURRIED OUT...

GOSH! SALLY! WITH THAT BOLING HOMBRE WHO JUST ARRIVED IN SILVER CITY!





THE BOY GOT AWAY WITHOUT BEING SEEN, EITHER BY SALLY OR HER COMPANION, AND WALKED GRIMLY TOWARD THE HOTEL. HE HAD COME TO TOWN JUST TO SEE SALLY. NOW HE MIGHT JUST AS WELL RIDE BACK TO THE BAR Q...

NEVER THOUGHT SALLY'D BE TAKEN UP WITH AN OLDER MAN. WHY, SHUCKS, THAT HOMBRE MUST BE THIRTY!



MARK WAS SO INTENT ON HIS GLUM THOUGHTS THAT HE WAS ALMOST RUN DOWN BY FIVE ROUGH-LOOKING MEN, RIDING THROUGH TOWN.

FOOLS! WHO DO THEY THINK THEY ARE?



THEN THE KID'S ANGER TURNED TO SUSPICION AS HE SAW THE FIVE HOMBRES TIE UP IN FRONT OF THE GENERAL STORE. WHEN HE SAW THREE OF THE MEN ENTER AND TWO STAND OUTSIDE, HE REACHED FOR HIS GUNS.



SUDDENLY A BULLET CREASED MARK'S SHOULDER! ANOTHER SPLINTERED THE WOOD OF THE HOTEL'S CLAPBOARDS JUST BEHIND HIM...

YEOW-W-W-W! GOTTA TAKE COVER QUICK!



SUDDENLY THE TOWN BECAME A BEDLAM OF CONFUSION AS THE MEN OPENED UP KILLING WITHOUT MERCY...



DEPUTY SHERIFF ED WARREN WAS STANDING INSIDE THE HOTEL LOBBY WHEN THE SHOOTING STARTED...



MEANWHILE INSIDE THE SILVER CITY GENERAL STORE...



A FEW MINUTES LATER...



IT HAD HAPPENED SO SUDDENLY THAT IT WAS ALL OVER, WHEN...



IT TOOK THE SHERIFF ONLY A HALF AN HOUR TO ROUND UP A POSSE OF ANGRY MEN IN SILVER CITY. ANGRIEST OF ALL WAS JOHN BOLING WHO HAD BEEN CALLING ON SALLY WIXON...



WHEN THE POSSE RODE OUT, THE SUN WAS DEEP IN THE WEST. "WON'T BE MUCH TIME," THE SHERIFF SAID, "BUT WE MAY PICK UP A TRAIL AFORE DARK."



BUT JACK BOLING WAS LIKE A MAN POSSESSED. HE KNEW THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL, ALL RIGHT!



BUT BY THE FOLLOWING MID-MORNING THE POSSE RETURNED TO SILVER CITY... EMPTY HANDED. THE MOST DISAPPOINTED OF THEM WAS BOLING...

THEY SLIPPED US, SHERIFF... AND I FEEL LIKE IT WAS MY FAULT! BUT THEY WAS IN THEM HILLS! MARK MY WORD!

PSHAW, DON'T TAKE ON SO JACK. YUH TRIED. NONE OF THE REST OF US DONE ANY BETTER. BEST WE CAN DO NOW IS HOPE FOR A BREAK!



BUT AFTER BOLING HAD RIDDEN AWAY...

SHERIFF! I THINK BOLING'S A LIAR! I THINK HE LED US OFF THE RIGHT TRAIL A-PURPOSE!

STEADY, LAD THAT IS A SERIOUS ACCUSATION! SURE IT AIN'T 'CAUSE SALLY'S A BIT SWEET ON JACK!



NO, SIR! BUT I SHORE WOULD HATE TO SEE HER MARRY UP WITH A RAT! ...ANYWAYS I'M KEEPIN' CLOSE TO THAT HOMBRE, SHERIFF GOT A FEELIN' HE'S GOIN' TUH LEAD ME SOMEWHERE INTERESTIN'!

DON'T BE A FOOL, SON! GROW UP, BOY! GROW UP!



THE KID WHEELED HIS MOUNT THEN AND RODE IN THE DIRECTION BOLING HAD TAKEN. AFTER AN HOUR, HE PICKED UP THE TRAIL...

LEADS STRAIGHT INTUH THE EAST HILLS LIKE I THOUGHT IT WOULD SEEN' BOLING LED US WEST LAST NIGHT!



BY MID-AFTERNOON, THE KID SAW THAT THE SINGLE HOOF PRINTS HE WAS FOLLOWING JOINED SEVERAL OTHERS. THEN, AT LAST, HE DISMOUNTED AND FOLLOWED ON FOOT. FINALLY...

JUST AS I FIGURED! A HIDEOUT!



THEN IN THE CAVERN BELOW...

YUH WAS RIGHT, BOLING. YUH TOOK THAT POSSE CLEAN OUT OF OUR WAY. WE'RE IN THE CLEAR!

FOR NOW, YES! BUT THEY'LL BE ON OUR TRAIL TODAY! WE HAVE THE MONEY! YOU MEN SEPARATE. ME, I'LL GO BACK INTO SILVER CITY. NOBODY SUSPECTS ME!







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